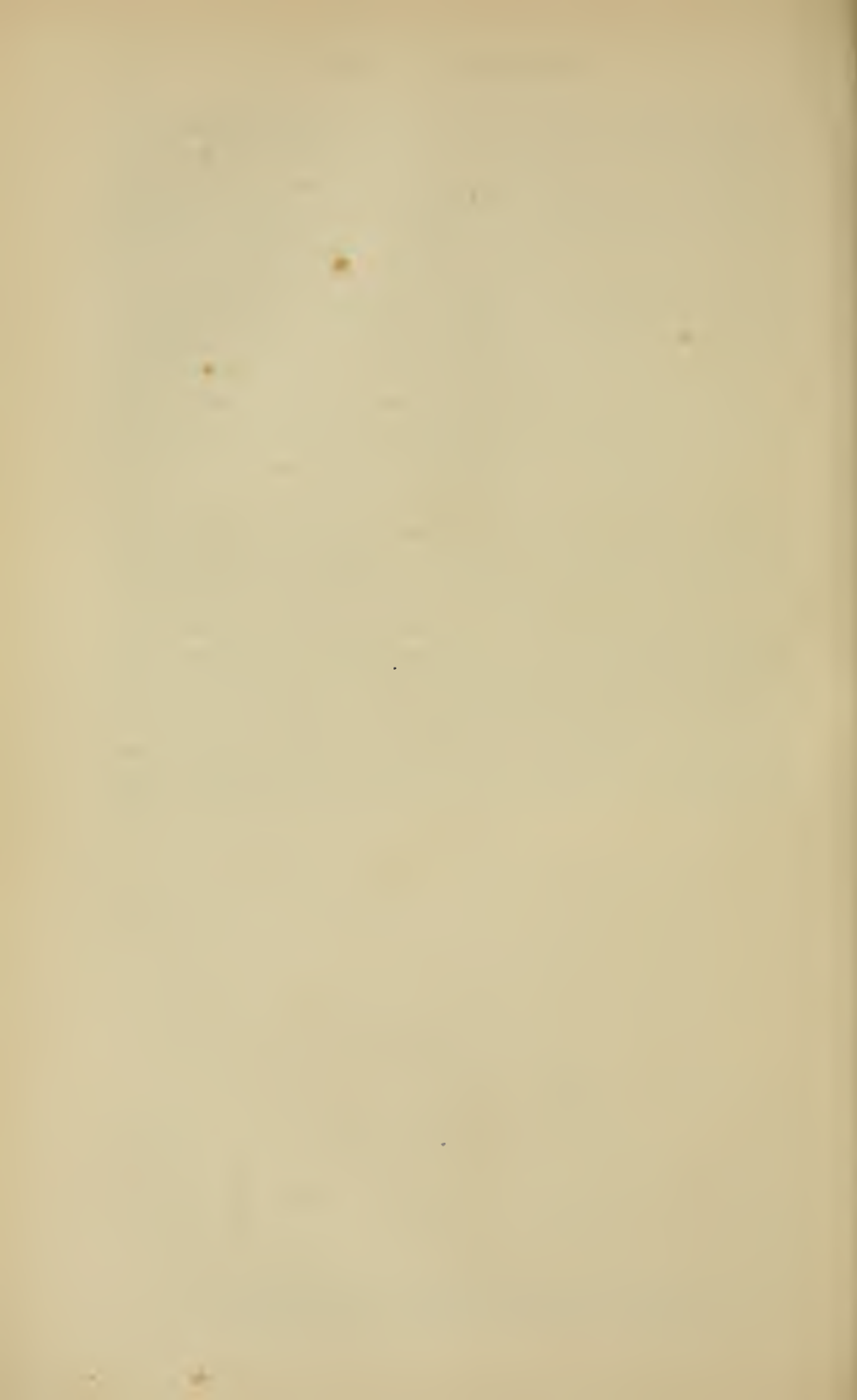






LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS



A CHARGE

DELIVERED

AT THE FOURTH VISITATION OF HIS DIOCESE,

AT

Manchester, Lancaster and Blackburn,

ON THE

5TH, 6TH AND 7TH NOVEMBER, 1884,

BY

THE RIGHT REV. JAMES FRASER, D.D.,

Bishop of Manchester.

MANCHESTER :

FARGIE (LATE ROWORTH), 21, ST. ANN'S SQUARE.

LONDON :

GRIFFITH, FARRAN, OKEDEN & WELSH.

—
1884.



THE CHARGE
OF
THE RIGHT REVEREND THE LORD
BISHOP OF MANCHESTER.

MY REVEREND BRETHREN AND
BRETHREN OF THE LAITY,

THE custom of this diocese, laid down by my predecessor in office, to whom we owe nearly the whole of the excellent organisation which, as a diocese, we possess, has been that an episcopal visitation should be held every four years. Not that Bishop Lee fully carried out the custom in practice, for I believe he only visited the diocese twice in the 22 years of his episcopate; at least, I have only seen two of his published charges. But he established the period, and I have advisedly kept to it. It is true that the canons of 1603 seem to fix "every third year" as the proper period for the visitation of the bishop; but as they also require confirmations to be triennial, and to take place at the same time at which the bishop visits his diocese—"in his accustomed visitation"—and such a rule in this thickly peopled district would be manifestly impracticable, it seems to be a case in which a canon 280 years old need not be pressed in its letter, and, there being no principle involved, custom, when it coincides with convenience, may be allowed to prevail over rule. In one diocese that I know of—that of Norwich—the visitation of the bishop is held every seventh year. But that interval seems as much too wide as the interval of three years is too narrow;

and to the quadrennial period I now, by preference, for the fourth time adhere. Our confirmations, as you all know, are biennial; and still following the admirable programme marked out by Bishop Lee, every incumbent knows, to within a few days, when, in each alternate year, the confirmations in his rural deanery will be held; and, without waiting for any special notice from the bishop, can choose his own time for the preparation of his candidates.

At a time occupied with events—social, political, ecclesiastical—of such wide and profound interest, exciting so many hopes and fears, and in all cases such eager, if not anxious, apprehensions, it is manifestly impossible, within the compass of time during which I could reasonably hope to command your attention, to touch upon all the topics that inevitably suggest themselves. It is absolutely necessary to make a selection; and though some may regret to find a subject in which they are specially interested either wholly omitted or inadequately dealt with, I trust that most subjects of importance, upon which a diocese has perhaps a right to know its bishop's mind, will be found to have received attention to some extent proportionate to their importance. I am as alive as any of you can be to the critical character of this present time. Great questions, affecting not only the relations of the Church to the State, but touching the Church's own standards of doctrine, and ritual, and discipline are in agitation everywhere. We are living in the ferment of a new time. The old order changeth. The democratic principle, which is making itself felt in the State every year more and more cannot but affect the Church; and as the Gospel of Christ has happily kept itself free from all political attachments, and even from all special social conditions, seeking only to infuse its own pure and noble spirit into all institutions and all forms of society with which it may find itself surrounded, we need not be afraid that the Church, if she be free in the spirit and truly taught the mind of Christ, will lose her power of adapting herself to the most novel conditions and changed circumstances of the outward life of men. It is for us to see to it that we be not so far cramped by old ideas, which

however valuable in, or suitable to their time, have outlived that time, and are now hindrances rather than helps to us in our work, that we lose the elasticity and the resourcefulness which the situation demands, and become a Sardis in the 19th century,—a Church with a name of life, when it is dead. I ask you to remember, therefore, that we are not living in the fourth century, or in the days of the Tudors or of the Stuarts, but in the 48th year of the reign of her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria. It is with methods suitable to the spiritual and moral needs of this present time that we are concerned. This seems so obvious as to be a truism; and yet men appear to be continually forgetting it, and to be living, both in thought and conduct, in any other age than their own. It was Lord Clarendon's judgment of the clergy that, as a class, they were the slowest of any to discern the signs of the time, or to deal practically with them when they discerned them. Whether the reproach was ever justly deserved or not, I am sure that now is a time when we have all need to rub our eyes and try to ascertain the tendency of things; and if there be indeed a stream, outside ourselves, which makes for righteousness, and the old channels, which once sufficed, are too narrow to contain it, we must see whether those channels cannot be widened, lest the stream become a flood, and break down all barriers, and the very ideas of order and rule perish in the outburst of an anarchical fanaticism. That there is some danger of this no reasonable man, capable of observing phenomena and of calculating their drift and force, can doubt.

At such a time it surely becomes one who holds the office of an overseer in the Church to invite his brethren in the ministry calmly to consider with him what these phenomena precisely mean: what these stirrings and yearnings indicate; what modifications in our system and methods may help us to guide, and perhaps to satisfy them; and generally, to learn whatever lessons of wisdom or expediency they have to teach us. I will attempt a brief conspectus of the state of the diocese first, and then proceed to deal with some of those larger questions which are occupying man's thoughts to-day.

One previous word, however. The Church has sustained some grievous losses in the last four years. I will not dwell on the death of her great Primate, on Advent Sunday, 1882 ; the greatest name, I venture to think, on her roll of archbishops since Tillotson. Great in the councils of the Church ; great also in the councils of the nation—whose prescient eye seemed to discern the signs of the coming time, and who tried to teach Churchmen those lessons of wisdom true, because large-hearted, which would carry the ark of the Church safely, even through storms if they arose. He is gone, and the influence which sprang from the confidence that all men seemed to place in him, is gone with him ; and naturally men will pause before they give it as unreservedly to another. Nor can I do more than touch upon, in the briefest terms, the gaps caused by the hand of death in our own ranks,—the antique picturesque figure of James Dawson Bannister, for more than half-a-century Incumbent of Pilling ; the gentle, spiritual face of William Haworth, for 46 years Vicar of Fence-in-Pendle ; the handsome features, the genial manner, the scholarly accomplishments of Henry Mildred Birch, for 32 years Rector of Prestwich ; the old type of culture and of manners exhibited by Thomas Rothwell Bently, for 44 years Rector of St. Matthew's, Manchester ; the warm and kindly heart of William Thursby, for more than 30 years Vicar of Worsthome, and a great benefactor of the Church in the neighbourhood in which he resided. Death has laid his inexorable hand on all these.* But there are two graves on which I must be allowed to lay the wreath of my own grateful and affectionate remembrance—the graves of John Burder and Hugh Birley : the one my courteous and ever-trusted secretary, who from the very beginning served the diocese as faithfully as for 15 years he served me ; the other the very type and leader of those princely-hearted laymen whose sagacious foresight and open-handed liberality have made the Church in Lancashire as strong as she is to-day. You all knew them both, and can understand the sense of almost desolation, that came over me when God took first the one and then the other. And though others may be raised up as good, as

* Nor should I omit the name of Richard Newsham, of Preston, whose liberality in every form of church work has been so fruitful of results in that town.

helpful, as liberal, I should think worse of myself than I do if I ever could forget men whose friendship and whose helpfulness I proved and never found them fail. This poor tribute is, at least, due from me to their memory.

Speaking generally, and as I hope to show presently when I go a little more into detail, the state of the diocese, in all the great departments of Christian activity, is not only hopeful but encouraging. Some parishes here and there have perhaps fallen into the backwater, and enjoy that unenviable tranquility which simply indicates that nothing is being done. But throughout the diocese there are manifest tokens of life, and of active life; the instances of narrow and bitter partisanship on the one hand, or of a schismatical lawlessness on the other, are rare; the clergy find willing helpers in the laity, whenever that help is needed and invited; the churchwardens are inspired with an honourable zeal to do their duty; and if there has been less church building in the two last than in some previous years, it is because, with the exception of a few districts, the wants of the Church have been fairly well supplied, and Churchmen are turning their activity, for the moment, into other channels.

When, however, I say this, I must say at the same time that our diocesan organisations—properly so-called—such as the Church Building Society and the Education Board—are sadly crippled from want of funds, and I must earnestly beg the clergy to bring the wants of these societies—and even the fact of their existence—more distinctly before their people, than many of them so far have seen their way to do. When I see what can be done in this direction in such parishes as Leesfield or St. John's, Hey, which are quite of the ordinary working-class type, and where people give their shilling or their half-crown a year, I see that there is a layer of goodwill and liberality which in many parishes we have not tried to reach, yet which can not only be reached but opened with the most advantageous results. I must commend also to the clergy in the archdeaconries of Manchester and Blackburn the Warrington Charities for the widows and orphans of clergy who have ministered within those limits, and the Clergy Daughters' School which we use so freely and support so

inadequately. In the archdeaconry of Blackburn hardly anything is done, the contributions to the widows and orphans' fund last year only amounting to £74, to the Clergy Daughters' School to £14. And yet I need not impress upon you the unspeakable value to the families of the clergy of both these branches of the charity.

Having singled out two parishes for praise in one direction, I may mention one more as an example in another direction, the success with which lay-help has been secured and organised : the one thing which in large parishes most of us feel to be the greatest need, and which at the same time we find it so difficult to supply. The parish of St. Luke's, Miles Platting, contains a population of nearly 10,000, living in over 2,000 houses. The rector is assisted by a curate, but feeling the utter inadequacy of such a staff to the spiritual needs of the parish, he has organised a Christian Workers' Association, who are pledged to help the clergy in the work of the parish by endeavouring to promote four great objects:—1. A more general and constant attendance at the public services of the parish church. 2. The bringing of infants to Holy Baptism, and young persons to confirmation. 3. More regular and punctual attendance at the day and Sunday schools. 4. The well being, spiritual and moral, of the inhabitants of the parish. The number of the members of this association is 98 ; they meet once a month to pray together, to take counsel, and to make their reports ; and the average attendance at the monthly meetings of last year was 59. I was myself present at one of these and can testify to the excellent Christian spirit and practical character which pervaded all the proceedings. Besides this organisation the parish, which contains about 70 streets and courts, is divided into 77 districts for the purpose of visiting, each district being placed under the charge of a single person (there are 13 men and 64 women thus employed), and containing from 16 (the lowest) to 40 (the highest) number of houses. These visitors give to the clergy, on a form provided for the purpose, notice of cases of sickness or sorrow occurring in their district ; the names of those who attend church but have not received a pastoral visit, probably as new comers into the parish ; and the names of new parishioners.

During the past year 718 such notices have been reported to the clergy. The services of the church are exceedingly bright and hearty, and seem to arouse a lively and sympathetic interest in those who attend them ; and though I read some remarks of the rector made at his annual congregational tea party, which struck me as unduly sad in tone, as though some remnants of vice and degradation were not to be expected even under the most perfect organisation, I can commend, as I have often commended, the example of this parish, as a pattern to which the organisations of our populous town parishes, each, of course, according to its opportunities and the measure of its needs, may, with great advantage, be conformed. Many parishes, I know, are already being worked on similar lines ; but as this is the most complete example of a parochial organisation, such as I desire to see largely imitated, I have selected it.

While calling attention to the importance of endeavouring to secure the services of well-disposed laymen in the work of the Church, I ought not to pass by the fact that at the last session of our Diocesan Conference, in 1883, a committee was appointed to consult with the Bishop and lay down a scheme for an association of lay helpers, and to take measures for carrying it into effect. The committee have just reported to me, and I will print the document as an appendix to this charge when published. The subject has been now for some time before the diocese, and if the scheme is generally approved, I think the time has come for acting upon it. It is a maxim of modern life that association is strength. Such a bond of union as is suggested between lay helpers has been found a powerful stimulus to action in the diocese of London, where there is an association composed, I believe, of fully 4,000 members ; and I see no reason why a similar association should not be formed and do good work here. I shall be glad to give the project all the support and assistance in my power, and I ask the committee to continue their labours till the organisation is fully established in the diocese. I am satisfied with the scheme which they have prepared, and if it should need any modifications these will be best discovered and can easily be made when it is put into practice. All I wish is that there may be no further delay,

and that the scheme may be in working order before the diocesan conference meets in the autumn of next year. We have talked quite long enough about it.

But I will now take a wider view, and it cannot fail to be of interest if I place before you in a summarised form some of the principal details of work which has been done in the diocese during an episcopate which will have completed its 15th year on March 25, 1885. The number of churches in the diocese at the present moment is 492, containing 357,806 sittings, 212,467 of which are free. In licensed chapels and rooms there is a further provision of about 43,000 sittings, which are nearly wholly free. There is, therefore, a total supply in the diocese for those who desire to worship God in the sober and well-ordered manner of the Church of England of about 400,000 sittings, of which 253,000 are free. There are still some waste or remote places requiring new churches, and some large parishes, of which Christ Church, Bradford, or S. Mary's, Oldham, may be taken as examples, urgently needing sub-division; but speaking generally of the condition of the diocese, I am not sure whether the time has not come for diverting our attention for a while from the task of building churches to the more urgent and difficult work of filling them. Of these 492 churches, 130 (of which 110 were the churches of new parishes) were erected during the episcopate of Bishop Lee, who pressed on this work with a diligence that cannot be too gratefully remembered, by which 87,000 new sittings were gained, at a cost of £542,000. In my own time, up to the present date, 104 new district parishes and ecclesiastical districts have been formed; 117 new churches have been consecrated (including 20 erected in lieu of former churches), built at a cost of £898,000, and providing accommodation for 70,000 worshippers. Some of the finer and more costly churches of this period are the Parish Church of Bolton, S. John the Evangelist, Cheetham; S. Edmond's, Falinge; S. Mary's, Balderston; S. James's, Collyhurst; S. Augustine's, Pendlebury; S. Mark's, Glodwick; S. Clement's, Ordsall; S. Peter's, Scorton; S. Benedict's, Ardwick; All Souls', Bolton (speedily to be followed by another, built by the same generous hand);

S. Peter's, Westleigh ; S. Anne's, Haughton ; Christ Church, Didsbury ; S. Elizabeth's, Reddish Green ; S. Thomas, New Hey ; S. Cross, Clayton ; S. Ann's, Clifton, which have all been built, and some of them partly endowed, by individuals ; while such fine restorations as those of the Parish Church, Bury, and the Parish Church, Leigh, the former of which cost £27,000, and the latter £10,000, show what can be achieved when Lancashire people are really interested in a work and are determined to carry it through.

Of the 492 incumbents of the diocese, 328—or 66 per cent.—have been admitted to their cures by me—a wonderful illustration of that law of change which gives to none of us here a long abiding place, and bids all do the work that lies before us while it is day ; while the number whom I have ordained and sent forth into the ministry of the Church in this period of 15 years is 456. Of the 492 Churches, I have either preached, or held a confirmation, or done some episcopal act in 478. The aggregate population of the 14 parishes which I have not visited (with the exception of one parish of 4,500 where peculiar circumstances kept me away) is under 5,000, so that, considering the population of the diocese has reached the huge total of 2,297,000, I have given opportunity to the great bulk of the people of knowing at least by face the overseer who was set over them.

The number of candidates for confirmation has been steadily rising year after year, till in the year 1883 it culminated in the large number of 16,354, the largest number, I should imagine, which has ever been confirmed, in these last days, in one year by a single bishop with his own hand. The figures of this year are not quite complete, as I have four or five smaller confirmations still to hold ; but they will probably amount to nearly 13,000. In the single rural deanery of Bolton I have this year confirmed 3,050 candidates, and from one parish, in that deanery, S. Matthew's, I have received 302 candidates, 122 of whom were males. These figures show what zeal and diligence will do. The total number that I have confirmed in these fifteen years has been 173,380 (65,674 males, and 107,706

females). I could wish that the proportion between males and females had been more equal ; and I cannot press any part of their work on the clergy with more earnestness than that—difficult, but not impossible—of getting an increasing number of the young men of their parishes ready to seek and to receive that strength from God—the one great stay amid the stormy passions and temptations of youth—which we believe to be given to those who duly seek it in this holy ordinance.

Of course all these statistics relate only to external things, and the credit for any success achieved is due to the zeal of the clergy and laity, who have laboured for these large results, much more than to the bishop, who has done no more than discharge his duty, and found all these things made ready to his hand. But I trust that no clergyman in the diocese has ever had any reason to complain that his work has been unappreciated by his bishop, or that in doing it he has not received that support and sympathy from me which he had a right to expect. I have been singularly unfortunate in my manner of giving expression to the deepest feelings of my heart, which are those of joy and thankfulness wherever I see good work done, if that impression has been left upon any mind.

And though I have said these are only external things, and no greater weight must be attached to them than belongs to such, I cannot but hope and believe that they are, in a measure, signs and proofs of something higher and better—of the stirrings of religious life, of spiritual progress, of a deeper, stronger faith,—which with hopeful hearts we may set against some of the less encouraging phenomena of the age. We are far from having reached the limits of achievement which with yet more earnest prayer and devotion and zeal we may be permitted to attain ; but this measure of success, won not without effort, is at least a token that we are on the right road, and that the faithful performance of duty does not miss its immediate and natural reward.

From evidence that I have before me I am afraid that some at least of the agents of the Liberationist Society are doing the work entrusted to them with even more of that acrimonious and bitter spirit which I noticed and regretted in my first charge of 1872. I

do not complain that the society should employ agents, or should pay them. So far it is a perfectly legitimate method of warfare, and we must be prepared for it, and meet it as best we can. But I think there might in fairness be some limit to the language of intense vituperation which these agents sometimes use. I extract a passage from a lecture, which I know has been the instrument of stirring up bad blood between neighbours in many parishes in this diocese, as a sample of the spirit that I am indicating. Endeavouring to prove the tyrannical spirit of "the State Church," the lecturer says:—"Who is it that has always sided with the rich against the poor? The parson.—Who has always ranged himself on the side of the peer against the people? The parson.—Who has kept the villagers of England in the deep ditch of poverty and ignorance? The parson.—Whom do the rural populations dread and hate most? The parson.—Who are for the most part the Tory centres in town and country? The parsons. The parson is a despot, and well do the inhabitants of our villages and hamlets know it. Many of them know that, if they went to the chapel instead of the church, they would get notice to quit their cottage, notice to quit their work, notice, in fact, to leave the place of their birth and upbringing, the place where their fathers sleep. Farm labourers are almost to a man the sworn foes of the parsons, and they long and pray for the day when the despot will be removed. Hundreds of villages in England to-day dare not have a Liberation meeting. They know the ruin the village tyrants would bring on them if they did. Am I asked, 'Is the Church of England worth preserving?' You might as well ask me, 'Is the cholera worth preserving?' No tyranny is worth preserving; and with all the emphasis of an intense conviction, I say that the Church of England is not, never was, and is never likely to be worth preserving." I think that many, who disapprove of the principle of an Established Church, but who are reasonable and fair-minded men, will dislike and resent such language almost as warmly as Churchmen can do. For it is the language of mere reckless and rancorous invective, calculated to give the utmost amount of pain rather than to produce the utmost amount of persuasion. It has succeeded for

the moment, as I know, in inflaming passion : but I doubt even if the most ignorant hearer, when he grew calm, believed it all, or supposed that this iniquitous "parson," this tyrannical "State Church," were either of them quite so black as they have been painted. I deprecate such weapons of controversy, and do not think that they do credit to those who employ them. An institution so abominable as the State Church is here represented to be, must have long ago perished, as it would have deserved to perish, in the storm of universal reprobation that it would have excited. It could not now be, as even its enemies admit that it is, stronger and more active than ever. Men do not tolerate what is described as being as bad as the cholera in their midst.

I see that the newspapers have described me as being about to take a very bold step in the direction of the extension of the diaconate. There really is not very much boldness in simply being prepared to give effect to a resolution which was unanimously passed by the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury, and which was adopted this year in full synod by the Convocation of York. The following are the terms of the resolution : "This House is of opinion that, in view of the overwhelming need of increase in the numbers of the ministry, and the impossibility of providing sufficient endowments for the purpose, it is expedient to ordain to the office of deacon men possessing other means of living, who are willing to aid the clergy gratuitously, provided that they be tried and examined according to the Preface of the Ordinal, and in particular be found to possess a competent knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, of the Book of Common Prayer, and of theology in general ; provided also that they be in no case admitted to the priesthood unless they can pass all the examinations which are required in the case of other candidates for that office, and that they shall have devoted their whole time to spiritual labour for not less than four years, unless they are graduates, before they present themselves for these examinations." This resolution, though many thought that it might have been improved in some points, the York Convocation accepted as it came to them from the Upper House of Canterbury, in order that the unanimity of the two Convocations on the subject

might not be disturbed. After our session was concluded, the bishops, who were present, met in conference under the archbishop, to devise certain rules, which it was thought desirable should be followed in any attempt that any of us might make to give effect to the resolution. The rules agreed to were these :—1. Candidates for the office of deacon, thus understood, are not to be under thirty years of age. 2. They must be willing to serve gratuitously. 3. The request for ordination must come from the incumbent of the parish in which the deacon is willing to serve. 4. The examination of such candidates, though simpler than the usual one, shall require a sound and intelligent knowledge of the Old and New Testaments, the Prayer Book, and the formularies of the Church of England. I have received applications from three or four persons desiring to be admitted to the diaconate on these terms ; and if I find them duly qualified, I am prepared to admit them to this office, probably at a special ordination to be held for the purpose this coming Advent. My only doubt about the plan has been whether there is a sufficient number of persons at once desirous and fit to be ordained, who will in any adequate measure meet the necessities of the case. For that the clergy need more clerical help cannot, I think, be questioned. I myself doubt whether, as the law now stands, laymen, however well qualified, can preach in our churches. Under proper safeguards I wish they could. They certainly cannot assist the priest in the distribution of the Sacrament, where, unless you adopt the method, only justified by necessity, of administering to a railful of communicants at a time, the service is very trying, physically to the weak, and often spiritually even to the strong ; and where, with the increasing number of communicants, especially at the great festival seasons, some help is urgently required. The deacons of the new order, if I may so call them, will be able to do both these things, and in many other ways help forward the wellbeing of the parish ; and though I do not expect too much from the experiment, it certainly seems to me an experiment worth trying. And so, if fit men present themselves to me, I mean to try it. The ministries of the Church are not open, by our statute law, to persons actually engaged in trade ; but the idea of those who have pressed this matter forward with

much zeal is that there are a number of persons scattered about the country, of independent means, or who would not be called tradesmen, who are quite fitted for the office, and who, if it were opened to them, might be disposed to seek it.

It is natural to pass from deacons to deaconesses. There seems evidence enough that in the earliest days of the Church, in the apostolic age itself, women were employed in the ministrations of the Church, and classed in orders according to the nature of their work. There was possibly an order of prophetesses, such as were the four daughters of Philip the Evangelist, who dwelt at Cæsarea. There was the order of widows, for whom certain broad rules are laid down by S. Paul. There was the order of deaconesses, one of whom was that Phœbe of Cenchrea, mentioned in Romans xvi. ; and the women (whom the learned Bishop of Durham says must have been deaconesses, and not, as our authorised version has it, merely the wives of the deacons) whose qualifications for their work are set down in 1 Timothy iii. 11. Indeed, the usefulness of the services that can be rendered by women in the Christian Church is indisputable ; and the only question is whether these services require training, and what is the best form of training for them. Without discussing this latter point, I desire to say that a deaconess institution has been this year established at Rochdale, in a building entirely suitable for the purpose, which has been placed by the gentleman who built it at the disposal of the vicar for this particular object. It is desired to give it a diocesan constitution, and to elicit for it diocesan support. It is at present occupied by one deaconess, a Christian lady of large experience, who is described to me as admirably suited to the work, and three or four probationers. The Vicar of Rochdale takes great interest in the enterprise, and watches over it wisely and affectionately. Everything at present is in the tentative stage, but I shall be glad to see it pass into an assured stability and permanence, for I am convinced that it may be an instrument of much good. I have myself promised a subscription of £10 a year towards its maintenance ; and I should be glad if others also could see their way to help

forward the cause. If there should ever be a dozen probationers in the house, the cost of the institution could not be much less than £500 a year. Another way of helping the institution is by recommending suitable persons to seek this training and offer themselves for this ministry. Canon Maclure, of Rochdale, will be ready to give all needful information. I cannot conceive any department of activity in which women imbued with a Christain spirit may find more happiness for themselves, or be the instruments of more good to others. I should regret if, in the midst of all our efforts to educate women for their proper work in life, this kind of work, in every way so proper for them, so fruitful of the most blessed results to others, should be overlooked or neglected. It will be a source of great joy to me if the Deaconess Institution at Rochdale, which it is desired to keep on the most simple, natural lines, thrives and prospers.

One of my rural deans has called my attention to a fact which has painfully impressed him in his visit to the churches of his deanery, viz., the great difficulty experienced in poor parishes in providing the funds required for the repair of the fabric of the church, and even for meeting the cost of the maintenance of public worship; and suggests the advisableness of creating a central diocesan fund, out of which grants might be made for these purposes. But I fear this is impracticable. Churchmen have become too parochialised in their ideas upon such subjects to make it likely that they would be willing to subscribe—at any rate in adequate amount—to a central fund; and the discriminating administration of the fund, supposing it to be created, would be a matter of such difficulty, and I am afraid also of such invidiousness, that a competent committee could hardly be found to undertake it. I can only offer a few suggestions in lieu of this one which my judgment compels me to dismiss as impracticable. In the first place, those who are responsible for these expenses must learn to look for help from the many rather than the few. Upon this point I may be pardoned if I repeat an incident which I have mentioned in public before, which happened to me this year, and caused me

unaffected pleasure and surprise. At Little Lever, a colliery village near Bolton, I was asked to preach a sermon this summer in behalf of the fund that was being raised for a new organ. They were ambitious—too ambitious, I told them—to have an organ which would cost £600 or £700. I thought a less expensive one would answer the purpose; but no; they had set their heart upon this object, and were not going to be balked. They had raised among themselves some £300, and my sermon was to give a further impetus to the movement. The Church, which contains about 800 sittings, was quite full with a congregation perfectly respectable but with no indications of wealth in it. I thought to myself when I surveyed them, Well, if I get £50 out of you I shall have done very well. The collection amounted to £128. But the composition of it was more wonderful still. There were five £10 notes, representing the wealth of the parish; and there were 59 sovereigns, representing the vivid interest in the work of those who were not wealthy but who were willing to give, and who must (in St. Paul's phrase) have "laid by them in store" to be ready for this appeal, and who therefore must have been moved, like the Macedonian churches whom the Apostle holds up for an example to the Corinthians, to "this riches of their liberality" by their own warm hearts, and not by any eloquence of mine. A few Sundays later the same congregation, I was told, contributed an equal, or a larger, sum for the support of their schools. I mention the incident as illustrating what can be done when we throw ourselves upon the generosity of the people.

Another important point to be remembered is that repairs of the fabric ought to be attended to in time. An instance of a less pleasant kind than the one just narrated is before me now, and causing me a good deal of anxiety. There is a church in Manchester, St. Mary's, which I think might without any disadvantage be removed, and its population distributed among the adjoining parishes. This church has been allowed—I do not throw the blame upon anyone in particular—to fall into a lamentable state of disrepair. By Act of Parliament the maintenance of the fabric is one of the first charges upon the revenues of the Dean

and Chapter. If these repairs had been attended to ten years ago perhaps £500 would have put the church into solid and substantial repair. An architect's estimate of what now needs to be done puts the cost at upwards of £2,000. A commission that I appointed a year or two back to investigate the matter, reported unanimously that in their opinion the church should be removed; but so many difficulties surround this process, which, in view of all the circumstances, it would probably require an Act of Parliament to carry through, that I despair of seeing the removal accomplished in my time; and yet I should regard any sum spent upon putting the fabric into proper repair almost as so much money wasted; for I fear that a congregation even to half fill the church is never likely to be gathered there.

Much money is also, I think, often wasted upon the internal decoration of churches, that decoration being generally, to my taste, of an excessive, and in some cases even of a coarse and tawdry kind, which might have been much better spent in putting the external parts of the fabric in solid and substantial repair. Attention to the state of the outer roof, to the glazing of the windows, and to the provisions against dry-rot—often never thought of till the devastating fungus has spread itself everywhere under the floor—would often save an expenditure of hundreds of pounds.

It is also a matter of paramount importance that churches should be adequately insured. Fires occur in them, generally through some defect in the heating apparatus, with increasing frequency; and the moral of St. Mary's, Crumpsall, fired by the lightning conductor (a badly-planned instrument of safety becoming the very cause of the disaster), insured for £2,500 and costing upwards of £15,000 to rebuild, is never absent from my mind when I reflect upon this possible danger to which all churches are exposed. If incumbents, with the Dilapidations Act before them, neglect to insure their parsonage houses to the required amount—three-fifths of their value—they know what penalty they will have to pay for their *incuria*.

Churchwardens—to whom, when faithful in the discharge of their office, I cannot express the gratitude that I feel to be their due—should also be reminded that they cannot legally transfer

debts, which they may have contracted, to their successors; and as they are personally responsible for the cost of anything they may have ordered, I cannot advise them to undertake any serious expenditure in behalf of the church till they have the funds in hand. I have been insisting on this point for some time; almost always at the consecration of a new church, when things start without any bad precedent having been established; and I am glad to believe that the prudence of the advice is beginning generally to be recognised. If it were universally acted upon, I do not believe that any greater difficulty would be experienced than now in raising the necessary funds.

I am pleased to learn that an ampler provision is now found in parishes of inventories, terriers, and iron safes, the latter so necessary for the proper custody of registers and other important documents, though still more attention is needed in this respect. A case was mentioned to me a week ago of a benefice under sequestration, where it is believed that a portion of the income is derived from a farm at a distance, but there appears to be no evidence immediately accessible of the existence of such a farm. The churchwardens know nothing of it, there are no documents in the parish chest, the incumbent is in America, and if the Ecclesiastical Commissioners cannot supply the information a good deal of embarrassment may be caused. This is only one illustration of an unbusinesslike state of things, which I fear is widely prevalent, and which I earnestly entreat you, in your own parishes, to get corrected.

Two grave cases of scandal which have occurred in other dioceses during the present year—the one of an ordained clergyman of a character so scandalous as to draw from the judge when he sentenced him the severe remark that he was one of the greatest scoundrels he had ever met with, the other of an impostor, professing to be a clergyman and officiating as such, whose character was nearly equally scandalous, and who has just received, as his due reward, the punishment of fourteen years' penal servitude, have awakened people's attention to the need of much greater circumspection in the choice of curates not personally known, or of those to whom a parish is entrusted in the absence

of the incumbent, even for the briefest time, than is sometimes exercised. Testimonials are so often given with a kindly benevolence which either suspects no evil or is willing to throw a cloak over it, that I am never inclined to accept them, unless I know the circumstances of the case, as a sufficient guarantee, without further careful personal inquiry. The impostor, to whom I have referred, who had more than once tried to get into this diocese, but had been as often baffled, at last succeeded in getting into a parish under another false name, and it was only when he had got matters into some trouble there, and had disappeared in consequence, that I was made aware of his existence in our midst. I must therefore most earnestly request that all my clergy, as a matter of duty, will communicate with me before they actually engage a new curate ; and that in all cases even of the briefest temporary employment, if they do not personally know the clergyman whom they employ, they will ask for the exhibition of the letters of orders before they allow such a person to officiate in their parish. Considering the serious consequences involved, for instance, in an unordained person solemnising marriages, we are bound by a proper sense of duty to exercise this needful vigilance and caution.

Perhaps I should add in this place, before passing on to broader questions, that I regard every incumbent, whom I allow to give a title as binding himself by a special responsibility to see to that young curate's training. The first curacy is a kind of apprenticeship to ministerial work. Many a young man has very little idea of what this is without guidance ; and to turn a novice loose upon a parish without the help of example or of counsel is going the best way to spoil him for ever becoming a useful clergyman ; for first impressions stamp themselves deep, and the contagion of slovenliness or negligence is so subtle that it often finds its way into hearts that once were animated with a sincere desire to engage earnestly in the Master's service. I have in more than one case marked this deterioration, sloth taking the place of zeal, and a formal service at length satisfying the idea of worship, and stifling the flame of true devotion in the soul.

I must acknowledge that I do not like the tone of many modern advertisements for curacies in the clerical newspapers. The very contractions adopted in them are almost hieroglyphical and need an interpreter. For these young men, who ask to be sent forth to proclaim the gospel of the grace of God to perishing souls, seem mainly to concern themselves about good society, or the eastward position, or Catholic ritual. And a sphere in which best to learn the way to discharge the pastoral care is seldom on their list of requirements. The late president of the Congregational Union, Dr. Macfadyen, of Manchester, addressing the other day the students of Hackney College at the opening of their session, spoke strongly on the decline of pastoral work, stating that "it had almost become a lost art among Nonconformist ministers." (*The Christian*, September 25, 1884.) Of course, I am not able to verify this statement by any knowledge of what is found to be a deficiency in other religious bodies than our own, but I do often hear the complaint of incumbents that they cannot persuade their curates to realise the importance of visiting the people in their homes. My own experience—gathered, it is true, only in small rural parishes—is that if you lose touch with the people in this point, you lose it nearly altogether; and that no eloquence in the pulpit, even if you possess it, no activity in the mere organising work of the parish, will compensate for neglect of a duty, which, as Dr. Chalmers well said, more than anything else makes a "church-going people." Young men who look to be preferred by me had better see to it that this part of their work is done diligently and faithfully. I regard it as by far the most important part.

The then Primate, Archbishop Tait, having carried a motion in the House of Lords on the 9th March, 1881, that a humble address be presented to Her Majesty, praying her to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the constitution and working of the Ecclesiastical Courts as created or modified under the Reformation Statutes of the 24th and 25th Henry VIII. and any subsequent statute, a commission composed of 25 members of the highest eminence—11 clerical and 14 lay—was nominated for the purpose by the Queen's command on the 16th day of May in the same year. The Commissioners held 75 meetings; and finally

published their report—a most complete and exhaustive document—in the late summer of 1883. The report was first considered in a numerous assembly of Churchmen by the Church Congress, which assembled at Reading in the autumn of that year, and some very exaggerated language was used as to what it was supposed already to have effected. One speaker, more heated than the rest, asserted that it had at least done one good thing—that it had torn in pieces the Public Worship Regulation Act, and deprived Lord Penzance of his usurped authority; neither of which statements, I need hardly tell you, had the slightest foundation in fact. The subject was put down for discussion, and was discussed in our own Diocesan Conference on October 17th, 1883, the Chancellor of the diocese contributing an elaborate paper on the report itself and its probable results; and though I myself suggested that we should be perhaps premature in passing any definite resolution on the subject beyond thanking the Commissioners for their labours, and a motion was made to that effect, it was lost, and the Conference recorded its opinion that, generally speaking, the recommendations of the Ecclesiastical Courts Commission are satisfactory. Since then the report has been discussed in the Convocations of the two provinces, in the Church Congress at Carlisle, and in every diocesan conference that has assembled; and the difficulties of any legislation proceeding upon a basis which should command the assent of all parties in the Church—without which attempts at legislation appear to me to be doomed to failure—have only become more manifest. For the differences of opinion do not touch the details of the report, which might admit of modification, but its very fundamental principles. One party will not consent to the episcopal veto, which can put an initial bar in the way of all proceedings. Another party, and that a very vehement one, will not hear of a body of lay judges to decide in cases of appeal to the Crown. In the face of this wide discrepancy of opinion, which has been emphasised by the trenchant terms in which it has been expressed, he must be a much more sanguine man than myself who expects any satisfactory issue from legislation; and though I see that it is stated to be “an open secret” that a bill is in preparation and will be shortly introduced into Parliament embodying

the recommendations of the Commissioners, I have no knowledge of the fact, and among such diversity of judgments still existing I can hardly conceive its becoming a statute of the realm. Indeed it is plain from some strong language that has been used by the organ of an extreme party among us that the dissatisfaction of that party against the present system of things is not so much against the courts as against their judgments. "We must make it plain," says the paper which represents this party, "that we will not give place by submission, no, not for an hour, to such deliverances as the Purchas and Ridsdale judgments, whatever the tribunal may be from which they issue." I owe this quotation to a paper read by Prebendary Ainslie, himself one of the commissioners, at the recent Church Congress at Carlisle; and it fully justifies his despondent remark that legislation is hopeless so long as such a spirit prevails.

Before, however, passing away from a subject on which I feel I can throw no light, and which is still the matter of such heated controversy, I would ask your attention to the reservations with which the Archbishop of York accompanied his concurrence in the report, and to some special and very important remarks in the separate report of Lord Penzance, who, in consequence of illness, was only able to attend fourteen meetings of the Commissioners. The Archbishop in both of his reservations has the concurrence of the Chief Justice of England. The first reservation has reference to the episcopal veto on proceedings, from which he dissents; the second states what seems to me a still more important principle. "Great evils," says the Archbishop of York, "have resulted from legislation in the past. To prevent evils for the future, something should be done to afford a means of direction and arbitration without resort to the Courts. One such means is supplied by the Prayer Book, in the reference to the authority of the bishop when doubts or divers interpretations prevail. But unless the decisions of the bishop are held to be binding till they are appealed against, they are of no avail. Let the bishop have power to make an order in all matters affecting the conduct of public worship, which shall be binding until reversal by the Court of Appeal. Let there be an appeal to the Archbishop's Court, either from such an order,

or from a trial in the Diocesan Court.' Once make the bishop's authority a reality, and not an utterance of which no Court will take notice, and he would be able to compose many of the disputes which now arise about such subjects without prolonged litigation."

Lord Penzance's opinion is practically the same. His whole report is worth the most attentive consideration, but the passages in it which specially struck me are these :—

"It is this personal power and jurisdiction of the bishops (with any safeguards that might be thought necessary) that I would revive. Let all complaints of the conduct of the clergy in respect of ritual or doctrine be made to them ; let them have power to take evidence on oath, and institute what inquiries they think right, and in the way they think right ; let them issue any admonition they think fit to the offender, and if he does not obey let them pass a sentence of suspension. An appeal from any such sentence might be to the Provincial Court ; and on the other hand, if the bishop refuses to act, or fails to act with effect, the complainant should be allowed to promote the office of judge against the offender in the Provincial Court, the leave of the judge having been first obtained, whose duty it should be to refuse it if he found the complaint to be frivolous, trivial, vexatious, or urged without necessity. From the Provincial Court an appeal should lie in all cases to the ultimate Court of Appeal. . . . In making the above suggestions for the intervention of the bishops before a resort to the courts of law, I regard the position of the bishops in these matters rather as that of superior officers entitled to control and direct the clergy by their commands than as merely judges correcting them by censures of law. . . . It is also to be borne in mind that every ordained priest has at his ordination taken a solemn oath to obey his bishop. Great good would, I think, ensue from this conferring on the bishops a large personal jurisdiction and discretion in composing disputes, restraining excesses, and settling the differences between a clergyman and his parishioners without an appeal to the law, which should only be invoked when the bishop has failed."

These utterances of persons so competent to form a judgment deserve the careful consideration of those moderate and sober-minded persons who desire to escape from difficulties which they feel by a way which seems at once hopeful and constitutional ; and if there is any fear that the liberties and rights of the clergy are not sufficiently safeguarded in these proposals, it must be remembered that in every case there is reserved to them an unfettered right of appeal. At any rate these suggestions entirely commend themselves to my own mind ; offer a solution of the problem

more satisfactory than any other which I have seen ; and so, having brought them under your notice, I pass on from a thorny and troublesome subject.

I have several times seen it publicly stated that the bishops have come to an agreement among themselves, in the exercise of their discretion, not to allow any more ecclesiastical litigation till the constitution of the ecclesiastical courts has been revised. I do not believe that any such agreement has been either suggested or arrived at. I can only say that such a proposal, from whomsoever emanating, has never reached me. The revision of the constitution of the ecclesiastical courts is still a matter of the dark, and possibly the remote, future, and any such resolve on the part of the bishops would look like an attempt to postpone the redress of all grievances felt or borne by the laity at the hands of the clergy to the "Greek Kalends." Nor do I believe that the discretion of the bishop, at any rate under the Public Worship Regulation Act, is of the absolute and unchallengeable kind which any such agreement would suppose. For if the bishop thinks fit, after considering the whole circumstances of the case, to veto further proceedings on the representation made to him, he is to state his opinion in writing, and such statement is to be deposited in the registry of the diocese, and a copy to be transmitted both to the person who has made the representation and to the clergyman complained of ; and I do not feel at all sure whether a mandamus from the Court of Queen's Bench might not compel him to proceed, if in the opinion of the Court the reasons for such veto were deemed insufficient. And indeed it would be monstrous that the simple will of the bishop should be employed to shelter manifest and defiant wrongdoers, and to hand over the whole Church to lawlessness and anarchy. For that would be the practical outcome of such a course of action on the part of the episcopate.

No doubt the bishops are most anxious—an anxiety in which I fully share—that there should be no further litigation. What has taken place has been a grave scandal and a disturbance of the Church's peace and progress. But who have been the authors of that scandal and that disturbance—the clergy who defied, or the

bishops who endeavoured, according to the bounden duty of their office, to maintain the law? And if there is to be no further litigation, we must look for that blessed result to the returning good sense of those who feel that obedience is a nobler principle of conduct than self-will, and that no adherence to a cherished ceremonial, confessedly a matter of only secondary moment, is worth the cost of the peace of the Church by which it is purchased, and not to the bishops ignoring their duty and denying to parishioners who may have a very just and serious grievance their proper and lawful remedy. At any rate, speaking for myself only, I cannot thus undertake to connive at lawlessness.

The Prime Minister has recently addressed a letter to the Bishop of St. Asaph, which was publicly read in the conference of that diocese, and to which, considering the source from which it comes, repeated reference is likely to be made. Mr. Gladstone is contemplating the contingency of disestablishment; and putting aside the question, as too vast and too polemical for him, whether disestablishment would be disastrous or not, he affirms that there is only one way in which it might come to be disgraceful. "That one way parts into two. Disestablishment would be disgraceful if it were due to the neglect, indifference, or deadness of the Church; but this is a contingency, happily, so improbable that for present purposes it may be dismissed without discussion. It might also be disgraceful were it to arrive as a consequence of dissensions among the members of the Church; and the particular duty of Churchmen with regard to disestablishment is the duty of taking care that dissensions from within shall not bring Establishment to its end. The great maxim, *in omnibus caritas*, which is so necessary to temper all religious controversies, ought to apply with a tenfold force to the conduct of the members of the Church of England in respect to differences among themselves." Upon this text, the *Manchester Guardian*, which has all through taken a peculiar, though not an ungenerous, line in these disputes, reads me a homily. "There is"—I quote the words of a leading article of October 25—"there is for the moment a lull in ecclesiastical controversy, but we need not travel back far if we desire to seek out evidence of the evils which may be produced by a spirit

of aggressive intolerance. In our own diocese we have recently seen much more than enough of this militant Churchmanship. This is the danger against which Mr. Gladstone's letter is directed. He reminds Churchmen of the comprehensive character of the Church. Her history has tended to bring within her limits a great diversity of views. Evangelicals, Broad Churchmen, High Churchmen, and Ritualists are to be found within her capacious fold, and if she is to be maintained on a firm basis, it is essential that these apparently discordant elements should cultivate a spirit of mutual forbearance. . . It seems inexplicable that it should be necessary to enforce this doctrine of moderation and reserve. The whole history of the Church is a protest against the narrow exclusiveness which would seek to impress upon Anglicanism an inflexible uniformity."

With the general spirit of these remarks I entirely agree, for I have never been one animated by a temper of narrow exclusiveness, or who has sought 'to impress upon Anglicanism an inflexible uniformity.' On the contrary, I have always pleaded for greater freedom, and have said that such freedom might safely be allowed if men were only loyal to the spirit of our institutions and were not constantly seeking for something behind them. And I have always maintained that freedom ought never to be sought, and if sought cannot be secured, by trampling on existing law. And the writer of the article to which I have referred, though he quotes, yet leaves wholly unnoticed the sentence with which Mr. Gladstone qualifies the practical application of "the great maxim *in omnibus caritas.*" "Men ought, of course, *in the first place to remember that their right to differ is limited by the laws of the system to which they belong.* But within that limit should they not also each of them recollect that his antagonist has something to say?" It is not unlimited toleration for which the Prime Minister pleads, which might carry us anywhere both in doctrine and in ritual, but mutual forbearance within the limits "of the laws of the system to which we belong." No language could better express the position which I have always endeavoured to maintain. Far from wishing to narrow the platform of the Church of England, I desire to widen it. Though I am perfectly satisfied with the position as it is, and

thank my God repeatedly that "He has set my feet in so large a room," I would gladly satisfy, if the giving of somewhat more freedom would satisfy, those who are less contented with it than myself. But I demur to the principle that individual selfwill is to be taken as the measure of obedience, and that to win freedom it is necessary to adopt the methods of anarchy. There may have been times when a revolution has seemed the only remedy for wrong; but neither in things political nor in things ecclesiastical can it fairly be said to be the necessary remedy now. For where is freedom unduly restrained? In what department of earnest Christian activity, in what that conduces to the true reverence and beauty of Christian worship, in what that helps to bring the soul nearer to its perception of its share in the redemptive work of Christ, in what that relates to the pastoral care, or the devoutest administration of Sacraments, or the right to devise new methods of winning souls, can any of us feel or fancy that he is working in fetters and that he is unable to "make full proof of his ministry"? Even Paul when claiming to the fullest his "freedom from all men," recognised his obligations to the "law of Christ" (1 Cor. ix. 19—21), and where the freedom is so large as it is in the Church of England, considerations for the peace of that Church ought to count for something with all who would be deemed her loyal and dutiful sons. In Mr. Gladstone's wise and emphatic words let them "remember in the first place, that they are limited by the laws of the system to which they belong." And if they claim—as some do claim—the right to interpret these laws for themselves, they are introducing a principle which is subversive of the very idea of society, and which would throw the ordered and regulated life of man back into the chaos and anarchy of barbarism.

The question of Church patronage has now been occupying the attention both of Churchmen and of the public at large for many years. It has never, however, come so decidedly to the front and made such an evident step in advance as in the present year. The scandals of the existing system seem at last to have touched the consciences of men. There is no wish to destroy private patronage, which, as has been said, "secures a greater

variety of qualifications than could be had if appointments to benefices were entirely in the hands of the Bishops," but only to secure parishes and people from its abuse, and to stop, or at least to put some restraint upon, the sale of benefices to the highest bidder, the scandal of which had become intolerable. There were two bills before the House of Commons in the last session dealing with the subject, the one brought in by Mr. E. A. Leatham, the other by the Hon. E. Stanhope. Not unnaturally that of Mr. Leatham went somewhat the furthest, as it proposed to abolish not only the sale of next presentations but in great measure the sale of advowsons. The bill of Mr. Leatham was debated, on the proposal that it be now read a second time, on the 18th June, and eventually, together with Mr. Stanhope's bill, and an important amendment of Mr. Grey's enabling the parishioners to veto the presentment to a benefice of any clergyman whom they consider unsuitable (which, however, was lost by 141 votes to 83), was referred to a Select Committee of the House, of which the Right Hon. W. E. Forster was elected chairman. In the course of the debate some notable things were said. It was stated by Mr. Leatham that "two-thirds of the saleable patronage in the Church had passed into clerical hands, and they were the benefices so held that were chiefly advertised for sale in the newspapers." He gave a noble reply to a question that he supposed he might be asked: "Who was he, with his Liberationist antecedents, who sought to build up the Church upon the very side on which her defences were crumbling into ruin?" To such a question he would answer, "I belong to the race of those Nonconformists whom the Church persecuted in the olden time, and who, if now in existence would not seek a nobler revenge than in attempting to remove her abuses." The Home Secretary, Sir W. V. Harcourt, said that "in now assenting to the second reading, they were asserting the principle that the sale of livings for money was, in point of fact, a violation of what was regarded as a sacred trust; was a thing which the House of Commons condemned; and that they desired to get rid of a practice which was most injurious in its operation, and could only be considered as a grievous scandal to the Church of England."

The Select Committee, which consisted of 18 members, and met five times, published their report in the beginning of August. It is succinct and practical, and its general purport must be known to most of you. It may not, however, be out of place here to record its principal recommendations. The Committee agreed—(1) that the sale of next presentations be prohibited; (2) that resignation bonds be abolished; (3) that donatives be turned into presentative benefices; (4) that if a fair method of compensation be adopted, the sale of advowsons be prohibited, with certain limitations, which however I need not specify; (5) that in place of the present declaration against simony, declarations be substituted, to be made by the clerk and the patron, that they have not committed certain specific acts forbidden by law; (6) that no sales of patronage be valid unless the instrument effecting them be registered in the diocesan registry; (7) that in all cases, before the institution of a presentee to a living, public notice shall be given to the parishioners, and the parishioners shall have sufficient opportunity of submitting to the bishop any objections felt within the said parish to the appointment of the presentee; (8) that if a certain number of the parishioners object to the presentee on the grounds of physical or mental incapacity or moral delinquency, the bishop may after inquiry, if he think fit, by a commission, refuse to institute the presentee; (9) that the power of bishops to refuse to institute a presentee on the ground of unfitness in point of age or want of proper testimonials be made clear; (10) that patronage boards composed partly of laymen be established in every diocese, with power to purchase and hold advowsons and present to benefices; and that the churchwardens of any parish of which the benefice is vacant be members of such patronage board *pro hinc vice*.

While prepared to give a general approval to all these recommendations, though not regarding all as of equal importance, I consider that those which I have marked 7, 8, and 9, contain the cardinal points of the whole question. In my first charge, delivered in the year 1872, I claimed for parishioners the right of making themselves heard in preventing the presentation to a benefice of any clergyman who should be unfitted for the post

either on physical, mental, or moral grounds. It is simply intolerable that the persons most concerned in the issue should have no voice in the appointment of their pastor. I do not think the system of election of the minister by the parishioners would work well. I have known instances in which it has worked miserably both for the parish and for the clergyman elected ; but that the people should have no power of making legitimate objections heard and, if they can sustain them, of making them effective is, as I have said, intolerable and indefensible.

For similar reasons I have never been able to see or feel the objections to the Church Boards Bill drafted by Mr. Albert Grey which are entertained towards it by some, if not by most, of the clergy. I am convinced that the principle of the bill is right, and if any defects can be shown in its working provisions they can be removed or modified in the course of that process which all measures undergo before they become law. In the debate upon the bill in the Northern Convocation on April 27, 1881, I ventured to say:—"It seems to me that in principle and aim the measure is sound and good, for it proposes to give to parishioners—I prefer this word to 'congregations'—a legitimate voice with regard to the services of the Church and the management of other affairs of an ecclesiastical nature affecting the parish. I should think that this was an object which every member of Convocation, who does not wish to maintain what has been invidiously called the autocracy of the clergy, would be ready to promote. I think the bill, with some modifications in detail, may be made impotent for mischief and potent for good. At the present time there is nothing more important than to give the laity in our parishes a legitimate voice in the management of their ecclesiastical concerns." And if this was a truth needing to be spoken in 1881, it is still more needful to be spoken in 1884. For whether we like it or not the onward march of the democratic principle must be manifest to all. If in political affairs, as the Archbishop of Canterbury said with so much force in the House of Lords in the famous debate on the second reading of the Extension of the Franchise Bill, it is necessary to "trust the people," it is equally necessary to trust them in

ecclesiastical affairs. And I am convinced they may be trusted without misgiving. There is no reason that I know for thinking that the working classes as a body are hostile to the Church. I believe they will be even more ready than some classes higher than they in the social scale to remove abuses which are protected by too many vested interests, and to make her more efficient for her highest work, the ministration to souls. The Church Board, as constituted by Mr. Albert Grey's bill, has no power to make changes in the conduct of divine service or in any other matter of an ecclesiastical nature except within the limits allowed by law; and if the incumbent disapproves of any such change he has a power of appeal to the bishop of the diocese, whose decision is final. Feeling so strongly as I do that the wishes and preferences of the parishioners in these indifferent matters ought to be consulted, I cannot consider that these provisions, so guarded, would either lessen the proper influence of the incumbent, or in any other way prove unfavourable to the interests of religion in a parish; and that parishioners need some such protection against the whims and caprices of incumbents recent events in many parishes in the land have only too clearly shown. If in a parish which has been unhappily distracted by unwise courses, a little heat should be evolved at the election of the Board, even that would be better than acrimonious correspondence carried on in the columns of partizan newspapers, or annual struggles and disgraceful scenes at the Easter Vestry. I have said that I do not commit myself to all the details of the bill as at present drafted; but its principle has my full approval.

The bill for legalising marriage with a deceased wife's sister is, I fear, certain to re-appear. In the year 1882 it was thrown out in the House of Lords by a narrow majority of four in a house of 260. In 1883 the second reading was carried in the same House by a majority of seven; but, by a somewhat unusual course, the opposition was renewed on the third reading, and the bill was lost by a majority of five. This year a resolution in its favour was moved by Mr. Broadhurst in the House of Commons and carried by a large majority—238 votes against 127; and the bill was again introduced in the House of Lords by Lord Houghton,

who has been its consistent advocate, but withdrawn on the ground that time could not be found—it was not brought in till July—to carry it through all the necessary stages. In 1883 both the archbishops and twenty bishops voted against the bill ; and its friends have never lost an opportunity of attributing its failure to the prejudices of the ecclesiastical mind. But to have voted in the same lobby with lay peers of such divergent views on other subjects, but all united on this, as the Earls of Selborne, Cairns, and Shaftesbury, Lord Coleridge, the Dukes of Argyll, Richmond, and Somerset, the Marquis of Salisbury and the Earl of Carnarvon, may at least clear the bishops from the imputation of prejudice or priestly intolerance, and may lead people of fairer minds to believe that they had a good reason for the vote they gave. For, indeed, the change in the law would be followed by changes in the social and family life of the country, the importance of which has hardly been measured by those who clamour for it. The bill has no principle in it ; breaks in upon the table of prohibited degrees at a point where it is almost impossible that it should stop ; by an arbitrary selection seeks to remove one restraint, while it leaves others, which in the eyes of its promoters, if they are consistent, must be quite as objectionable, as they are ; and in the emphatic and pointed words of the Lord Chancellor, while not constructing a new marriage law, destroys an old one. It surely is not wise thus to tamper with the most sacred institution of family life, and to run the risks which such tampering must involve. Indeed on the second reading of the bill in 1882 one noble lord boldly avowed that he should like to sweep away all prohibitions founded upon the principle of affinity ; while a writer in the *Spectator* newspaper, commenting on the debate in 1883, ventured upon a yet wilder statement—“ We should reply,” says this writer, “ to Bishop Temple by saying that piecemeal legislation is the best kind of legislation in cases where a specific grievance is clearly seen and widely felt, without its being clearly seen that there is any great principle on which it would be safe to base the law that would remedy that grievance. Undoubtedly, as Lord Kimberley said, a marriage law which rendered consanguinity the only ground of objection—a marriage law which permitted a man

to marry his stepmother or his stepdaughter, and a woman to marry her stepfather or her stepson—would create an amount of instinctive horror in the public mind which would be very dangerous, if only on the ground that a marriage law which permitted what the people at large think unnatural, must sink in the respect of the people. . . . We are disposed to think that if the law sanctioned adoption as a legal step—as we wish it did—it ought to forbid marriages between an adopted parent and an adopted child, so entirely is that relation, even when only artificially taken up, one exclusive of the passions. Still, with this one exception, why should not all marriages of mere affinity be legalised, and those finer instincts which, as we quite admit, revolt against marriages between people who have once held to one another the position of even quasi-brother and sister, be trusted to hinder this kind of marriage from becoming frequent.” (*Spectator*, June 30, 1883.) So we are advised to give up the *principle* on which our marriage law now rests, and while allowing marriage between a man and his deceased wife's sister, to trust to the finer instincts of the people, which the writer admits are revolted by this kind of marriage, to hinder its becoming frequent. I confess I have no faith in these finer instincts as a barrier against passion; and if the law is required to give way in one point I do not see how it can maintain itself in any. For the principle once broken down, passion may easily create a new grievance, and we may yet live to witness the marriage of a man with his stepmother, which St. Paul denounced as “fornication not so much as named among the Gentiles.” (I. Cor. v. 1.) It is not without cause that I say we are running risks in thus rashly dealing with the existing law. But the main question for us clergy to consider is, what must be our course if the change we all but unanimously deprecate should ever become law. I can hardly suppose it possible that the clergy will be called upon to solemnise these marriages, which would be contrary to the express law of their Church; and, indeed, in the bills hitherto proposed the provision was that they should take place before the registrar. But I scarcely think, if they were made valid by the law of the land, we should be justified in treating persons who had contracted them

as though they were living in adultery and had forfeited their right to Christian privileges. The saddest result of the change, to my mind, would be the element of confusion it would throw into families, and the disturbance of those relations of "affection without passion," which Lord Coleridge eloquently said need not to be narrowed, but enlarged. On these grounds I shall still vote, as I have always done, for the rejection of the bill, if it is re-introduced, as it is certain to be, into the House of which I have the honour to be a member.

To the movement in favour of temperance there has been recently added a kindred movement in favour of purity. We have in our own diocese the St. George's Association; the Bishop of Durham, I believe, has set on foot the White Cross Army, and there is the organisation known as the Church of England Purity Society. I fear, from all I know and hear of the state of English society, there is to the full as much need of the one movement as of the other. In the case of the poor the condition of their dwellings, which is occupying the attention of a Royal Commission, has no doubt much to do with the sad results which we deplore. In the case of the rich and well-to-do, where the vice is quite as rampant, its prevalence can only be assigned to the innate foulness of the human heart, developed and intensified by the thousand malignant influences of the time. It was a frightful picture that the chaplain of Clerkenwell Prison set before the Carlisle Congress of the extent of the sale of impure and obscene publications; and this is a kind of index of the extent of the evil. It is a delicate and difficult subject to deal with, and yet I feel it must be dealt with vigorously and promptly if the moral life of the nation is not to grow hopelessly putrescent and corrupt. I do not presume to dictate to you, my reverend brethren, what course you should pursue in your parishes, but I am sure that it is an evil which, charged as you are with the care of the souls of your people, you cannot afford to disregard. For I fear there is no doubt that it is an evil which is increasing among us; beginning among young persons of both sexes of the tenderest years, and branching out into manifold and scarcely suspected forms.

On the subject of temperance there is nothing new to be said. I have recently, at the request of the Diocesan Committee of the Church of England Temperance Society, addressed a pastoral letter to the clergy, urging them to favour the establishment of a branch of the Society in their several parishes; and the Secretary of the Society writes me word that my letter has already produced considerable effect. A difficulty however, threatening to be serious, has been brought under my notice, arising from what I cannot but regard as the extravagant propagation of the principle of total abstinence. One of my clergy writes to me that some of his parishioners, who are rigid total abstainers, have for some time past persistently refused to receive the cup at the Holy Communion otherwise than simply taking it into their hands and returning it untasted. Others will only receive in unfermented wine, which, properly speaking, is not wine at all. And these are cases of very serious difficulty, menacing not only the order of the Church, but the very directions of our Saviour in the institution of the Sacrament, and I really am at a loss to know how to deal with them. It seems to me to argue a lack of faith in the Divine presence not to believe that Christ will give us strength to resist temptation when we are simply doing His will. We clergy have no right, so far as I can see, to consecrate unfermented wine; and the only remedy that I can suggest in a case of exceptional difficulty is to adopt the principle of spiritual communion, and if those who approach the Lord's Table choose to deny themselves the cup, to allow them to do so on their own responsibility. I am, however, quite prepared to accept a better suggestion, if a better can be found. I have had cases mentioned to me of sad relapses into sin from this very cause—the very sight or smell of the intoxicant reviving the old, only half-conquered desire—and these cases apparently so well authenticated that I cannot dismiss the danger as one purely imaginary; and though I think that no one ought to press his principle of abstinence so far as this, where he has no reason to apprehend danger, there may be exceptional instances where exceptional treatment is demanded. Even a Sacrament of the Lord must not be turned into an occasion of sin. We condemn the spirit of fanaticism; but we should deal

tenderly with the fear of being tempted beyond what we are able to bear.

But it is time to bring this lengthy charge to a close.

The outlook of the immediate future, though not particularly bright or hopeful, might yet be darker and more discouraging; and there are within the horizon which bounds our view broad paths of light where we can see our way clearly, and on which we can travel securely and even confidently. The spirit of party, and the spirit of lawlessness have lost much of their vehemence; and if we were delivered from the curse of unscrupulous newspapers, which have reduced the practice of scurrilous invective and sarcastic innuendo almost to a science, and which I think Churchmen do not show their wisdom in encouraging, that vehemence would probably be still further abated, and we should be able to see things in their true relations, and not as they are distorted by the media through which they now reach our eyes. For my own part I have become so used to misrepresentations both of my conduct and my motives that "none of these things move me," and I try to pursue the course which my judgment and my sense of duty indicate as the proper one, without caring much for either abuse or praise. I have had difficulties to encounter, some of them I thought at the time, thrown in my way without any sufficient reason; and the action which I have felt bound to take was only taken with the greatest reluctance and under the conviction that I could not escape the obligation laid upon me, as a bishop, to maintain the law. The law at least justified me, and I can now look back upon the past calmly and without resentment; and only trust that by the combined exercise of good feeling and good sense I may never be placed in a like difficulty again. It really does not promote the interests of the Church or the cause of religion to throw embarrassments in the way of a bishop; and it always has been and still is a matter of profound regret to me that I have felt myself unable to co-operate with clergymen whom for their character and their work I have every disposition to honour, because they choose to take up an attitude in relation to the laws of the Church and of the realm which seems to me quite incompatible with our declaration of conformity and our vow of

canonical obedience, and which can only plunge the Church into an anarchy where all laws cease, and where every man does only what seems right in his own eyes. How far in the present tendencies of society such an attitude is wise or safe or of good example you can judge, my reverend brethren, as well as I.

My Admonition of November 25, 1881, was, with so few exceptions as hardly to require notice, received by the clergy with the respect which, I will venture to say, was due to it. It was a step taken not without much previous consideration and care. It received the approval—the all but unanimous approval—I think there were only three dissentients, and those not pronouncedly dissentient out of a body of forty-two—of a Council composed of the Deans and Canons of the Cathedral, both residentiary and honorary, the Rural Deans and Chancellor of the diocese, whom I convened to consider its terms before solemnly promulgating it to the clergy in Synod formally called. I required the clergy to consider the ritual of the Cathedral church, as then publicly practised and allowed, the standard of the maximum of ritual for the diocese. In that ritual, neither what are called “the vestments” were worn, nor were candles lighted ceremonially, nor was the chalice mixed nor incense used, nor, so far as I was aware, was anything done or attempted which went beyond the limits allowed by law. If this standard had been frankly accepted by all, it would have secured a service of worship edifying, reverent beautiful; and it would have cut off all pretext for litigation and all reasonable grounds for suspicion or heartburning. It was frankly accepted by almost all. In two or three instances it reduced a ritual which had gone beyond lawful bounds, and I dare say caused some little sacrifice of feeling to those who made the reduction, but who, I trust, have been repaid by the consciousness that the sacrifice was made for the sake of the higher interests of the Church. But in far more numerous cases it has helped clergymen who had long been waiting for an opportunity, to raise their services from the level of baldness, if not of slovenliness, to something more akin to decency and order; and I believe that the general result has been a considerable increase of the spirit of reverence and devotion, so far as these can be influenced by

external things, in the congregations of the diocese. And though I see it still pleases hostile critics in newspapers to describe the experiment as a complete failure, to those who know the actual results it will seem to have been a success far beyond what I dared to expect or even hope for.

In times of excitement like these in which we live it has been said that even a midshipman rashly firing off a pistol in a foreign seaport might kindle the flames of war which might devastate half a continent ; and it is impossible to say to what extent the future peace and even existence of the Church as a national institution depends upon the character and conduct of the clergy. Scandals are too frequent among us. Here it is a clergyman liquidating with his creditors and his benefice sequestered to pay his debts. There it is an incumbent suspended for drunkenness. Elsewhere a parish is kept in continual hot water, and the Easter Vestry is a scene of uproar almost as great as that which took place in the theatre at Ephesus, because unwise or unlawful innovations have been introduced and the parishioners find their wishes and their preferences studiously made light of or ignored. And all these things perceptibly weaken the Church, and make her less able than she ought to be to give an answer to the gainsayers. At the same time, I do not believe there ever was a time when real work was more appreciated and faithful pastors more honoured. The position that many of the clergy of this diocese hold in the hearts of their people is a delightful thing to contemplate ; is the very bulwark and strength of the Church. If it is not so everywhere it is because it has been forfeited for reasons only too obvious—by want of temper, or lack of prudence, or discerned differences between the life and the preaching, or inattention to duty, or the mistrust that is always gendered when it is felt that the man's heart is not in his work. Men recognise that their minister cares for other things more than he cares for them ; and so the warm Lancashire heart grows cold, and congregations become thin, and help, once liberally proffered, is by degrees withdrawn, and the whole organisation of the parish suffers ; for "the head is sick and the whole heart faint." I hope the thought that, happen what may, our own individual interests are likely to be

secured, does not prevent our taking that larger thought and care for the future interests of the great institution to which we belong, which, if we are loyal to it, and care more for the Church than for ourselves, we ought to take. In a vivid description of a battle—I think it was one of the sea-fights in the harbour of Syracuse—Thucydides characterises the ardour of the combatants in some such terms as these: “Each thought things were going badly in that part of the action in which he was not himself engaged.” My counsel would have a reverse effect to this. I would say, see how the battle against infidelity and sin is faring at that post where Christ has placed you. See that your own loins are girded and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like men who wait for the coming of their Lord. We are each of us, as it were, compassed around with a great cloud of witnesses, and they are neither unkindly nor unconcerned. If we fail to hold our post, either through negligence or cowardice, the effect is felt far beyond our own parish or our own diocese. Men point at us as though we were but samples of the generally decaying forces of Christianity—as though the Church’s defenders were all equally nerveless and panic-stricken. And, above all, let us never turn our eyes or our thoughts away from the Church’s great purpose in the world, which is, not to present to men’s minds the imposing spectacle of a vast endowed and established institution, but to be a messenger to weary souls of the good tidings of the Kingdom, to conquer the world to Christ, and to bring the Gospel of a Father’s love home to the hearts of men.



APPENDIX A.

Miscellaneous Statistics collected from Returns to Articles of Enquiry.

Insurance of Churches.—In the archdeaconry of Manchester there are five churches wholly uninsured ; in Blackburn ten ; in Lancaster ten. From two parishes there is no return. Many more churches are very inadequately insured. One, which I have heard cost £22,000, is only insured for £1,000 ; another, which must have been equally costly, for £2,000 ; another, which would probably cost £5,000 to rebuild, is insured for £100 ; of two others, the chancel only is insured.

Inventories and Iron Safes.—In the archdeaconry of Manchester there are 118 churches which have no inventory ; 41 no iron safe. In Blackburn those figures are respectively 84 and 29 ; in Lancaster 65 and 12. The Form of Inventory and Terrier, promised by the Chancellor, and for which many of the clergy say they are waiting, will be published in the *Diocesan Directory* for next year. Of course, it will need adaptation to the particular circumstances of each parish. Where iron safes exist they are often described as damp and unfit for the custody of documents, generally because they have been built into the wall, or are otherwise badly placed. This is a matter that should be seen to.

In some parishes dissatisfaction is expressed at the frequent interments of non-parishioners. The church-wardens have the remedy in their own hands, as such interments cannot legally take place without their consent.

There appear to be only three parishes in the diocese in which the Holy Communion is administered less than twelve times a year. In most parishes it is administered much more frequently than this.

There appears to be a good deal of illegal dealing with seats. In one parish the return states that persons have put brass-plates on the doors of their pews, thus appropriating them without any pretence of legal right. Church-wardens ought not to allow these invasions of the rights of the parishioners. In several parishes there exists an illegal custom of buying and selling pews. In one parish the "free and open" system is declared to be a failure.

I must thank the clergy and the rural deans generally for the pains they have taken to make these returns complete. In spite of the opinion of one incumbent—who declined to answer them in respect of his own parish—that the inquiries are "illegal, unauthorised, and many of them silly," I beg to assure the clergy that their conscientious and careful replies have given me a body of information relating to the diocese which I could hardly have acquired in any other way.

APPENDIX B.

Lay Helpers Association for the Diocese of Manchester.

On the 17th October, 1883—the first day of the Session—the *Manchester Diocesan Conference* passed the following resolution:—

“That the following Committee be appointed to carry out the Resolution of the Conference of 13th October, 1881:—The Dean, three Archdeacons, Revs. H. B. Hawkins, F. C. Woodhouse, Canon Stowell, Canon Maclure, Canon Allen, J. D. Kelly, J. H. Rawdon, W. Champneys, H. R. Heywood, A. J. J. Cachemaille, J. M. Elvy, J. H. Stanning, J. A. Atkinson, Messrs. Ralph Fletcher, Junr., F. J. Grant, H. H. Howorth, T. C. Horsfall, G. Milner, G. Harwood, with power to add to their number, and after consultation with the Bishop, to lay down a Scheme of Association of Lay Helpers and take measures to carry it into effect.”

The Committee met on October 21st, 27th, 30th, 1884—the Dean (Dr. Oakley) in the chair—and they added to their number Messrs. W. P. Fullagar, Herbert Philips, J. G. C. Parsons, D. B. Hewitt, W. W. Taylor, F. H. Leedham, Oliver Heywood, W. F. Ecroyd, M. P., J. Taylor, W. H. Worrall. They have drawn up the following Scheme, which is founded on the Scheme of the Committee appointed by the Conference of 1881:—

- 1.—The Lay Helpers in the diocese of Manchester shall be organised under the Bishop, to assist the Clergy, especially those of poor and populous parishes, in various branches of parochial work, under the direction of the Clergyman of the Parish, and an association shall be formed, of which the Bishop of Manchester shall be the President,

under the name of the "Lay Helpers Association for the Diocese of Manchester." The Association shall include two branches (1) for men, (2) for women.

II.—The Association shall consist of:—

Lay persons, being communicants, willing to assist the Clergy in parochial work, who shall be recommended by a Clergyman and two Lay Communicants, or nominated by the Bishop.

III.—The Association shall be under the direction of a Committee, consisting of the Bishop, as President, the Dean and three Archdeacons, *ex officio*, eight Clergymen, and eighteen Laymen, in the first instance appointed by the Bishop, with a Treasurer and one or more Secretaries appointed by the Committee. After the first appointment by the Bishop, one half of the Clerical and Lay Members of the Committee shall be elected by the Members at the Annual Meeting, and the other half nominated by the Bishop. The Diocese shall be worked in Districts, consisting of one or more Rural Deaneries as the Committee may arrange; in each of which Districts the Committee shall appoint a Secretary.

There shall be a Correspondent for each Parish, to be appointed by the Members in the Parish, or, failing such action, by the Committee.

IV.—It shall be a principle of this Association:—

- (1) That the Lay Helpers meet annually at least, at convenient centres, when there shall be a Service, with Holy Communion, and an Address.
- (2) That opportunities be afforded to the Members from time to time of conference and instruction.

V.—(1) No payment nor subscription shall be required of Members.

- (2) There shall be at all Services of the Association a collection in aid of the expenses.
- (3) There shall be in this Association Honorary Members, unable to take definite work, who shall be subscribers of not less than One Guinea, or donors of not less than Five Guineas.

- (4) The Secretaries shall be authorised to receive donations or subscriptions, large or small, from Members or others.

VI.—A Register shall be kept of the names and addresses of Members, showing what description of work each unemployed Member may be willing to undertake, and also the place and nature of the work in which each employed Member is engaged.

It was resolved that the Chairman and Secretary be requested to wait upon the Bishop and to lay before him the Scheme of the Committee for his approval, and respectfully to suggest that, in the event of his approving of it, he take the opportunity of his Visitation Charge to commend it to the Diocese, and at once proceed to nominate the Committee.

The following are the Members of the Committee :—

Ex-Officio.

THE RIGHT REV. THE LORD BISHOP, President ;
 THE VERY REV. THE DEAN ;
 THE VENERABLE THE ARCHDEACONS OF MANCHESTER, BLACK-
 BURN AND LANCASTER.

Nominated by the Bishop.

Rev. Canon KELLY.	Rev. W. CHAMPNEYS.
Rev. Canon MACLURE.	Rev. J. M. ELVY.
Rev. Canon STOWELL.	Rev. H. B. HAWKINS.
Rev. A. J. J. CACHEMAILLE.	Rev. J. H. RAWDON.
Mr. R. FLETCHER, JUNR.	Mr. R. H. JOYNSON.
Mr. W. P. FULLAGAR.	Mr. F. H. LEEDHAM.
Mr. S. GARNETT.	Mr. J. W. McCONNEL.
Mr. F. J. GRANT.	Mr. Geo. MILNER.
Mr. G. HARWOOD.	Mr. J. G. C. PARSONS.
Dr. HEWITT.	Mr. HERBERT PHILIPS.
Mr. O. HEYWOOD.	Mr. W. W. TAYLOR.
Mr. T. C. HORSFALL.	Mr. W. H. WORRALL.
Mr. H. H. HOWORTH.	Mr. J. M. YATES.





